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THE VITAL ROLE OF INTELLIGENCE IN COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS

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ABSTRACT

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An historical review of counterinsurgency warfare reveals one noteworthy constant – none has been effectively carried out without a methodology for gathering and disseminating timely and accurate intelligence data, or in today's parlance, "actionable intelligence." Effective counterinsurgency warfare, by its nature, attains greater success through human intelligence vice intelligence gained through national technical means (e.g. signals, imagery, measurement and signature intelligence; SIGINT, IMINT and MASINT, respectively). While the latter disciplines can be used with great strategic effectiveness, the preponderance of data is gained through a counterinsurgency intelligence collection campaign designed to gather, collate, and exploit data to expose insurgency cells for attack. This study will examine the historical record in several noteworthy counterinsurgencies, focusing on coalition or government (including law enforcement) intelligence operations. The purpose of this paper is to mine important strategic lessons and to extrapolate them for current and future counterinsurgency campaigns.

THE VITAL ROLE OF INTELLIGENCE IN COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS

One fact that surfaces from the volumes written about insurgency and counterinsurgency is that insurgencies are difficult to defeat. The historical evidence, particularly in the past century, bears this out. For every successfully prosecuted counterinsurgency campaign, there are significantly more that have failed.¹ Many of the counterinsurgency efforts that have succeeded in recent history benefited from circumstances peculiar to their environment, making it difficult to extract and apply meaningful lessons-learned to other scenarios.² Quite simply, insurgencies have inherent advantages which are not easily countered; and this too often has resulted in victory for the insurgents.³ That being said, 'difficult to defeat' is not the same as 'impossible;' counterinsurgency campaigns, deftly waged, can yield a successful outcome. This paper will demonstrate, through several historical vignettes, the vital role of intelligence in influencing the outcome of counterinsurgent campaigns. Lastly, based on this historical evidence, it will offer guidance for present and future application of key lessons.

Generally, insurgencies start for a reason – there is an injustice, or perceived injustice, that has not been, cannot be, or will not be addressed by the government or occupying power.⁴ This impasse leads the most radical factions within the populace -- usually the minority at the outset -- to some form of violence or armed resistance. The core belief that their cause is righteous (whether it is or not) stiffens the resolve of the cadre and creates a powerful foundation upon which to fuel the passions of the general public. If this situation were easily resolvable, one could argue that the insurgency would have never started in the first place.⁵ But by virtue of the existence of the insurgent movement, the government or occupier, to this point, has neither prevented the crisis from escalating nor set the conditions for peacefully resolving it.

The insurgents enjoy the initial momentum. They have freedom of action; choosing the time and place to engage the government's leaders, forces, and institutions. Generally, they benefit from geographic sanctuary, and in many cases, a political organization which is characterized by decentralized command, control, and operations. Further, they are unencumbered by bureaucracy, physical bases of operation, the rule of law and other strictures of statehood which may inhibit their adversary. Most importantly of all, they have near-perfect intelligence; their targets are the well-known, physical manifestations of the government's power which are ubiquitous; and thus, highly vulnerable.

Given these disadvantages, a government counterinsurgency campaign must be conducted with discipline and vigor; and it must incorporate all elements of national power into its strategy to have any hope of success. Recognizing the tenet that counterinsurgencies are

predominantly political in character is the first step in this process.⁶ Modern liberal democracies have never successfully turned back an insurgency using military force alone, though many have tried to do so unsuccessfully. While military operations are an essential component in counterinsurgency operations, experience has shown that political, economic, and informational/diplomatic efforts ultimately comprise the preponderance of the nation's overall effort in successfully quelling an insurgency.⁷ In the end, the government or the occupier must delegitimize the insurgency, assure the security of the population, and offer hope for a better future than that proposed by the insurgents.⁸

One indispensable component of counterinsurgency warfare, which cuts across the entire spectrum of operations, is the requirement for actionable intelligence.⁹ Accurate, timely intelligence on the capabilities and intentions of the insurgency is a prerequisite to success in all facets of counterinsurgency warfare. Due to the inherent precariousness of their situation, even counterinsurgent forces in possession of good intelligence can be defeated; but alternatively, they have no hope whatsoever without it. Intelligence, and the means to get it – a centrally-managed, experienced, and well-organized intelligence architecture – is fundamental to successful counterinsurgency warfare.

Given this fact, it is paramount that counterinsurgency forces gain this essential intelligence. Unlike conventional warfare, where the balance of intelligence data is derived from technical means (e.g. signals, imagery, and measurement and signature intelligence; SIGINT, IMINT and MASINT, respectively); in counterinsurgency warfare, intelligence is gained primarily through human interface. This intelligence is harvested from the human intelligence (HUMINT), investigative, and analytic capabilities of organic military intelligence and police forces, and from local, indigenous police forces in the area of operations.¹⁰

In a failed or collapsed state, where an indigenous police infrastructure is often weak or non-existent, military intelligence and police units by themselves are charged with obtaining the intelligence needed to drive operations.¹¹ This is a daunting task under optimal conditions, let alone in an undeveloped, anarchic environment. Typically, these units can anticipate a shortage of native linguists, unfamiliarity with the regional culture, a lack of credible sources from which to extract information, and in most cases, a glaring lack of manpower to accomplish their mission. Consequently, in addition to using all means at their disposal to gather, analyze, and disseminate intelligence for current operations, it is imperative that they simultaneously work to reconstitute, reorganize, and train indigenous personnel to do the same.¹² In the final analysis, as revealed in the vignettes, the success of the intelligence effort, and thus the counterinsurgency effort at-large, depends on the degree to which the latter task is fulfilled. The

following vignettes will highlight the successes and failures of various modern counterinsurgency campaigns in large part due to the intelligence and counterintelligence efforts of the principals.

French Indochina: 1945-1954

The causes of the defeat of the French counterinsurgency campaign in Indochina from 1945-1954 are numerous and complex and mostly beyond the scope and purpose of this study. However, among France's principal shortcomings throughout the conflict, beginning in 1946 with the outbreak of hostilities and terminating in 1954 with the final defeat at Dien Bien Phu, was its glaring lack of intelligence on the capabilities and intentions of Viet Minh forces. The French position was further compromised by their inability to safeguard adequately their own operational plans and troop dispositions from the enemy. The prevailing historical consensus of this war is that the French underestimated the spirit and warfighting ability of the Viet Minh, fought a predominantly conventional-style war in a counterinsurgency environment, and overextended their limited resources in an effort to be strong everywhere (and as the old adage goes, found themselves strong nowhere). These missteps alone were perhaps sufficient to guarantee an unfavorable outcome in Indochina; but, coupled with their failure to obtain actionable intelligence on the enemy in support of their strategic campaigns and with their failure to maintain operational security through effective counterespionage, the French sealed their fate.

As in the case of many such conflicts, where a technologically superior force is matched against a lesser foe, the French Expeditionary Corps enjoyed initial success. They occupied key terrain both in the northern (Red River Delta) and southern (Mekong Delta) reaches of Indochina. The Viet Minh opposition seemed to crumble in the face of French military superiority as France slowly but steadily increased its troop presence in the country. But, the Viet Minh, using classic Maoist "people's war" strategy, were not defeated but had merely melted away to sanctuary in preparation to fight another kind of war.

The French soon fell victim to their own success, confidently attempting to expand their control of the country into the hinterlands. This played precisely into Viet Minh plans.¹³ Over time, the French, unable to expunge the Viet Minh from outlying areas found themselves too far extended to protect their "secure" bases of operation, and were thus "drained white" by a concerted, well-executed guerrilla campaign of attrition.¹⁴ When the French were sufficiently weakened, General Giap escalated to "mobile warfare," the next stage of Mao's "people's war;" then, he delivered the *coup de grace* at Dien Bien Phu.

Throughout the war, the French were handicapped by a lack of intelligence. Lucien Bodard's description in *The Quicksand War* is illuminating,

The French who knew everything in general and nothing in particular, did their utmost to pierce this secrecy wherever they could gain some scraps of strategic intelligence from it. Planes took aerial photographs, but the results showed only the uninterrupted sea of forest. Patrols went out on reconnaissance, but they did not push far enough, to the places that mattered, for that would mean destruction. If prisoners were taken during these raids, they never knew anything, even if they could be induced to talk, not even the names of their officers or the number of their unit. This was often a genuine ignorance, for nothing had a name in the Vietminh army; or if it did, then it was a false name, and often changed.¹⁵

In their efforts to consolidate their gains, large mopping-up operations were conceived and executed with the goal of annihilating enemy resistance and pacifying a targeted region. But this became an exercise in futility as the French were unable to garner the basic intelligence needed to prosecute their plans.¹⁶ According to Bernard Fall, one of the great commentators on the French experience in Indochina, a "definite advantage of the enemy was its edge in combat intelligence. Very seldom did the French know exactly what they were looking for in the case of such a mop-up."¹⁷

Even in cases where credible intelligence was obtained, it was more often compromised by the enemy's vast underground intelligence collection network. For the French, this resulted in frustrating expenditures of manpower and materiel for dubious gain. Operational security and counterintelligence were virtually non-existent; and while some of this was attributable to inexperience, a good deal more is attributable to arrogance and a lack of respect for Viet Minh capabilities.¹⁸ Fall further clarifies the French problem in this excerpt from his seminal work *Street Without Joy*:

Even the smallest movement of troops, tanks or aircraft was immediately noticed by the population and brought to the attention of the Viet Minh agents. Thus the only effect of tactical surprise which could be achieved was that of speed in executing a movement, rather than in the concealment of the movement itself. The Communist High Command, therefore, nearly always had a fairly accurate idea of French forces in any given sector and knew how many of those troops would be made available for mobile operations.¹⁹

Towards the latter stages of the war (1951-1954), the French were able to gain better intelligence from their newly-formulated, indigenous commando groups (originally the Groupement de Commando Mixtes Aeroportes or Composite Airborne Commando Group G.C.M.A.; later renamed Groupement Mixtes d'Intervention or G.M.I.).²⁰ These French-led organizations, formulated in part to bolster indigenous participation in the war, were effective in

extracting valuable information from the local populace on the disposition and strength of Viet Minh forces. While principally organized and employed to disrupt enemy supply lines and to tie down Viet Minh guerrillas, they succeeded in supplying valuable information to French commanders as well. With a total strength of approximately 15,000 by war's end, these units operated independently in the enemy's rear areas and proved troublesome to the Viet Minh.²¹ In the end, the effort proved "too little and too late."²²

The French were simply not able to duplicate, nor counter, the massive and intricate centralized intelligence apparatus of the Viet Minh. In 1948, the Viet Minh organized the Quan Bao (military intelligence), responsible for the collection and coordination of all military intelligence in support of operations. The Quan Bao consisted of highly-trained, mentally and physically screened party members who were considered among the elite of the insurgent forces. This organization was involved in all key aspects of intelligence gathering to include prisoner interrogations, clandestine HUMINT operations (infiltration), and reconnaissance. This organization was able to gather valuable information, the likes of which the French intelligence structure could not replicate:

The efficiency and scope of the Quan Bao were revealed through captured documents which contained highly detailed and accurate surveys of French troop dispositions, habits, and activities. Survey of areas of French operations included terrain trafficability for both vehicles and coolies, as well as loyalty and attitude estimates of nearby native populations.²³

As mentioned, there were many contributing factors to the demise of the French in Indochina, but it is clear that the shortage of credible intelligence coupled with their own inability to safeguard operational intelligence, contributed greatly to their eventual undoing. Despite their modest successes in empowering indigenous forces, a pillar of successful counterinsurgencies, the effort was begun too late to influence the outcome of the war. Recruitment and retention of loyal indigenous combatants for the G.C.M.A./G.M.I. became an increasingly insurmountable challenge as the Viet Minh used intimidation and assassination of family members to dissuade support.

By the time the Navarre Plan was launched in 1953 to regain the initiative in Tonkin, the lack of sufficient combat troops was taking its toll on the French Expeditionary Corps. Again, this was exacerbated by poor intelligence concerning Viet Minh intentions and strength. The final decisive example of this intelligence failure was the French High Command's underestimation of General Giap's resupply apparatus at Dien Bien Phu.²⁴ Giap, with critical assistance from the Chinese, was able to move men, materiel, and ammunition in quantity at an astonishing speed completely unbeknownst to the besieged garrison at Dien Bien Phu.²⁵ After

the fall of Dien Bien Phu, war fatigue in Paris coupled with the U.S. decision not to intervene, brought French colonial involvement in Indochina to an end. For the French, it was a harbinger of worse things yet to come.

Algeria: 1954-1962

Before the ink was dry on the Indochina Ceasefire Agreement signed in July of 1954, trouble began to brew in Algeria. An Algerian Muslim liberation movement, the Front de Liberation Nationale (FLN), was plotting its initial strike against French colonial rule in Algeria. On the morning of 1 November, the first blows of the insurgency were delivered when over 70 coordinated terrorist attacks and acts of sabotage were conducted across Algeria.²⁶ This was the start of an eight year conflagration that ultimately resulted in Algerian independence.

As with all insurgencies, the causes were numerous. In the case of Algeria, the rebels were not without their legitimate grievances with colonial occupation.²⁷ Beginning immediately at the conclusion of World War II, Algerian Muslim discontent with colonial rule accelerated. The lack of political representation, unfair land distribution, racist mistreatment, and a general lack of parity with their French occupiers, soon spilled over into demonstrations, riots, and sporadic violence.²⁸ When the situation failed to improve, six notable hardliners formed the FLN in October, 1954 and charted the course of revolution.²⁹ The Algerian insurgency defies simple categorization; it was a colonial war of liberation against French occupation and rule, but it was also a civil war between Algerian nationalists and Algerians loyal to France. In its final chapter, it became an insurrection between pro-French hardliners, supported by elements within the French military, and supporters of Charles de Gaulle.³⁰ It was a bloody, bitter conflict that resulted in staggering military and civilian losses on both sides.³¹

Amidst the bloodshed and passion, the Algerian conflict is a fascinating study in counterinsurgency warfare; in particular, how intelligence operations failed at first, and then ultimately succeeded in invigorating the counterinsurgency. Initially, the French were unprepared for this kind of warfare and failed in many key areas to include; under-administration due to manpower constraints, under-estimation of the enemy, commitment of too few resources, and the failure to establish strategic bases.³² But in time, the government revised its counterinsurgency campaign and began to turn the tide against the insurgents; and had all but succeeded, when independence was granted. The irony was not lost on John J. McCuen, who noted that, "the Algerian struggle was an anomaly. The French eventually did most of the right things, but they still lost the country."³³

In the first two years of the war, the intelligence efforts of the counterinsurgent forces were abysmal. From the outset, they failed to anticipate the radicalization of the insurgents, their preparations for war, and their transition from politics to armed conflict:

French intelligence missed the significance when Ben Bella, Mohammed Khider, Mohammed Boudiaf and others organized the radical offshoot 'Revolutionary Committee for Unity and Action' (C.R.U.A.) in Cairo. The intelligence network identified the C.R.U.A. leaders and its links to Cairo. It picked up preparations for terrorism, but the information was too general for decisions. As a result, the French were effectively caught by surprise when the C.R.U.A. struck on the 1st of November, 1954 – at the same time converting itself to the F.L.N.³⁴

Meanwhile, the insurgents deftly employed their intelligence apparatus. Their network was pervasive and effective, albeit austere:

In Algeria, the FLN organized a rudimentary but effective intelligence net. It posted civilian auxiliaries to act as agents in the field. These auxiliaries infiltrated French-held villages, reconnoitered for guerrilla columns. They provided to the liaison intelligence officers of nearby units a steady flow of intelligence about such things as number of French troops, types of armament, and probable targets.³⁵

In the early months of the insurgency, French forces, withdrawn inside the northern urban areas, found themselves devoid of reliable intelligence information about the insurgents who were dispersed mostly among the rural population enjoying complete freedom of action to strike and withdraw unmolested. The exception to this was in the capital city of Algiers, where the F.L.N. launched a campaign of urban terror against French forces and their indigenous allies.³⁶ The French struck back with the introduction of crack paratroopers who routed the insurgents but in so doing, alienated many Algerian Muslims with their indiscriminate use of force and ham-handed treatment of noncombatants.³⁷ This was a major turning point in the Algerian conflict and spurred French forces and their political masters to action. From 1956 to 1960, energized by the Special Powers Law of 1956, the French embarked on a methodical, full-spectrum campaign which by its conclusion had asphyxiated the insurgency.³⁸

The French commander, General Jacques Massu, untethered from legal restrictions, was now prepared to fight the counterinsurgency with impunity. The army would take a carrot-and-stick approach to the problem. Massu instituted a two-pronged strategy; pacification to gain the support of the people, and an elaborate border control system to contain the flow of rebels from Morocco and Tunisia. To support these initiatives, Massu recognized the need for a stepped-up, aggressive intelligence effort. Using what amounted to martial law powers, Massu had all the police files impounded and ordered large-scale arrests; this allowed his intelligence chief to catalog the entire F.L.N. hierarchy. The government's "first goal" was to use this information to

crush the F.L.N.'s political infrastructure and restore administrative control to the government.³⁹

Gilles Martin explains the approach employed:

Intelligence gathered by human agents (HUMINT) was vital to attaining the first goal. Classic police and counterinsurgency work, facilitated by the highly structured and standardized NLF network, helped crush the rebels' PAO (political administrative organization).⁴⁰

Massu instituted "constant patrolling, house to house searches and checkpoints" all in an effort to choke F.L.N. activity.⁴¹ Perhaps most impressive, was Colonel Roger Trinquier's elaborate grid system that systematically divided areas into controlled sectors and sub-sectors down to the individual buildings and families living in each.⁴² French military units were then assigned responsibility for monitoring all activity within their assigned sector or sub-sector. This not only facilitated superb surveillance and control of insurgent strongholds but also provided an opportunity to build relationships with the community, an important aspect of the pacification effort.⁴³ Gridding also facilitated the rapid transmission of reports on insurgent activity up the chain of command. The Dispositif de Protection Urbaine, or Urban Security Service (DPU), was Trinquier's organ for managing and enforcing this network:

At the lowest level, an infantry company controlled a few villages and a couple thousand inhabitants...Sustained contact created a strong personal bond between the people and "their" company. Once trust had been established, the company formed village self-defense units, called *harkas*, which worked with the French to seek out and destroy rebels...The grid method was also applied to urban areas. Algiers, for example, was divided into sectors, with a neighborhood chief keeping watch on all buildings and city blocks in his sector. He was expected to identify all inhabitants and know why any were absent. If he did not, he was promptly accused of complicity with the NLF.⁴⁴

To enhance this mechanism, the French conducted a thorough census of the population and issued individual identification cards to all residents "which further exerted French control in the city, and, by September 1957, the F.L.N. had been broken in Algiers."⁴⁵

The army fully realized Massu's strategy with the construction of the Morice Line on the Tunisian frontier and the Pedron Line on the border with Morocco; this, coupled with the Navy's blockade of the Algerian coast, sealed off the rebels from foreign sanctuary and stopped the flow of arms and munitions.⁴⁶ The barricade was an "eight-foot, 5,000-volt electrified fence backed with minefields and constantly patrolled. By April 1958, the kill ratio of those trying to infiltrate into Algeria from Tunisia was reportedly 85 per cent, after which few attempts were made to do so."⁴⁷

Recognizing the need to mobilize indigenous elements, the French established an auxiliary police force known as the Groupes Mobiles Securite or Mobile Security Groups

(G.M.S.). Because of their blue uniforms they were called simply *parableus*. These units were manned by Algerian Muslims, some of whom were former rebels who possessed intimate knowledge of insurgent tactics. The *parableus* were superbly suited for their mission. By 1958, they numbered in excess of 8,500 and proved invaluable to counterinsurgency operations; “they offered the French an effective means for police work among the Muslim population, particularly in the urban areas.”⁴⁸

As the war progressed, the attacks and reprisals became more violent and inhumane; intelligence gathering followed suit as the military either sanctioned or overlooked the use of questionable interrogation methods to extract information from prisoners including “systematic torture, euphemistically referred to as ‘special measures’, involving electric shocks to the nipples and genitals, the crushing of limbs and organs in vices and pumping air and liquid into bodies.”⁴⁹ Cruelty and abuse aside, by 1959 and early 1960, the insurgency was defeated:

The FLN forces in Algeria were reduced to between 8,000 and 9,000 men well isolated from the population, broken into tiny, ineffective bands, with 6,500 weapons, most of which had been buried for lack of ammunition; not a single *wilaya* (region) boss in Algeria was in contact with the FLN organization abroad, not even by radio...All that would have remained to do, if the policy had not changed, was to eliminate the diehard insurgent remnants.⁵⁰

But the policy did change and after untold additional brutalities and much consternation, the French changed their orientation from counterinsurgency to disengagement from Algeria; and shortly thereafter, Algeria won its independence. In summary, the intelligence system proved remarkably adaptable after an inauspicious beginning. At the grave expense of civil liberties and individual human rights, the French conducted an effective intelligence collection, analysis, and dissemination campaign which greatly aided their operational initiatives to include the resettlement of villages (*regroupement*), the creation of forbidden zones, the deployment of civil-military action teams or Sections Administratives Specialisees (SAS), and the nomadization of small units in clearing operations.⁵¹ None of these tasks could have succeeded without accurate intelligence information. Additionally, they organized an effective indigenous police effort that greatly enhanced their penetration of hostile areas and reduced the burden on overworked French officials. In Roger Trinquier's view, “intelligence was one of several crucial enablers for defeating an insurgent. Others included a secure area to operate from, sources in the general population and government, maintaining the initiative, and careful management of propaganda.”⁵²

It would be unfair and inaccurate to characterize the entire French effort in a negative light; the French military had learned much from its experiences in Indochina and in the early

years of the Algerian insurgency. It had an almost evangelical commitment to winning the 'hearts and minds' of rank-in-file Algerian Muslims, mostly via youth and social programs sponsored by the S.A.S. The problem is that much of this was undone by a few highly-visible fiascos where force was applied indiscriminately or with excessive gusto. In the end, the spiraling circle of violence and reprisals and extraordinary anti-colonial pressure on France from abroad resulted in disengagement and independence for Algeria.

Malaya: 1948-1960

The insurgency began in 1948 with the outbreak of open hostilities against Europeans, and Malay-Chinese loyalists conducted principally by the Malayan People's Anti-British Army (MPABA), although there were other smaller armed factions involved as well.⁵³ The violence was the culmination of political tensions caused by a perceived lack of fairness in the treatment of the ethnic Malay-Chinese minority and the ascendancy of the Malayan Communist Party (MCP). At the time of the uprising, the British and indigenous military and police forces were few in number and many were under strength. The British responded by requesting reinforcements and by attempting to generate additional indigenous police and army units. However, in addition to the unfavorable force ratio between government and guerrilla forces, the initial British military operations conducted to quell the insurgency employed conventional tactics that were ineffective in capturing or killing enemy combatants. The Communist Terrorist (CT) forces retreated to the jungle, melted into the local population, and by operating in small bands, avoided detection by the army's cumbersome "cordon and search" operations.

As with the other vignettes, the lack of reliable, actionable intelligence was hampering the government's efforts to respond. In the beginning, the intelligence apparatus was representative of the overall British administration in Malaya – understaffed and improperly organized -- particularly for the type of fight within which they were embroiled. Given their resource limitations, the Federation Police worked feverishly, and to the best of their ability, to check the insurgents' progress.⁵⁴

It was a special squad of Chinese and Malay detectives that gave the (CTs) their first setback...this squad led by a British police officer, Bill Stafford, killed Lan Yew, the commander of the MRLA. Much of the credit for weathering the stormy days of 1948 and 1949 must go to the Malayan police.⁵⁵

Despite this encouraging anecdote, the CTs were successful in confounding the government during the first years of the insurgency. They enjoyed sanctuary by virtue of the government's inability to put enough police and soldiers in the field. In keeping with T.E. Lawrence's prescription that "the first principle of guerrilla warfare is one of detachment from the

enemy,” insurgent forces remained disengaged from government forces and struck effectively and with impunity from multiple locations at the time of their choosing. Secondly, they obeyed the corollary to Lawrence’s first principle of guerrilla warfare -- they acquired “perfect intelligence of the enemy’s movement and strength...from a friendly, or at least apathetic, populace.”⁵⁶ The Min Yuen, the political wing of the MPABA, used an extensive network of informants from the general population to gather timely intelligence on the whereabouts and movements of their intended targets, most of whom were European rubber planters, tin mine owners and their Chinese and Indian employees sympathetic to the government.⁵⁷

The British intelligence apparatus, which was formidable prior to the Japanese occupation, had not been reconstituted prior to the outbreak of the Malayan Emergency. Two events occurred in short succession, however, to set the intelligence architecture and the entire counterinsurgency campaign in the right direction. The first of these was the implementation of the “Briggs Plan,” with the arrival in 1950 of its namesake, Lieutenant General Sir Harold Briggs.⁵⁸ Briggs resettled Chinese “squatters” to new locations in an effort to deny CT forces sanctuary, support, and intelligence from the local population. He expanded police and indigenous defense forces and established a unified command structure for the direction and control of all counterinsurgency operations.⁵⁹ By the end of his tenure as Director of Operations eighteen months later, he had set the conditions for success in Malaya.⁶⁰ The second breakthrough was the reorganization of the intelligence structure and the emergence of police forces as the focal point of intelligence operations. This was accomplished by Briggs’ successor, General Sir Gerald Templer, upon his assumption of the directorship in early 1952.⁶¹

It was decided to organize the intelligence agencies around the police rather than the army. This capitalized on the static nature of police deployment, which enables the police to build up the intelligence picture in one area over a long period... Gradually, this system provided an ever-increasing flow of information for the Security Forces.⁶²

John J. McCuen, in his book *The Art of Counter-Revolutionary War*, assessed that this development sounded the death knell for the CTs in Malaya as the British and their Malayan allies systematically, albeit deliberately, identified, targeted, and neutralized the insurgents:

Within a few years, the intelligence people had pictures of all the active rebels. ‘Kills’ could be photographed by troops or police and identified on their return to base. Intelligence finally achieved its rightful place as a principal counter-revolutionary war weapon.⁶³

These initiatives were not without their problems; the resettlement program, although ultimately effective in cutting off the insurgent base, was fraught with problems. There were instances of insurgent infiltration into the newly-established resettlement villages, which resulted

in intimidation and extortion of the villagers, both Chinese and Malay. Some of the villages were located on poor land, were haphazardly constructed, or located too far from places of employment. However, in most cases, the resettlement villages were at least as good as what they left and oftentimes much better. The settlers received relocation allowances and subsistence stipends to minimize the hardship of the move. The insurgents, feeling the pressure of isolation, attempted to shift the focus of their intimidation regime to the aboriginal population living in the jungles of Malaya; while this caused a temporary disruption in British plans, the government expanded its outposts and soon co-opted the aboriginal tribes by providing much needed government services.⁶⁴ In the end, the resettlement program did provide enhanced security from the insurgents and isolated them from the support they depended upon.⁶⁵

With resettlement progressing and the intelligence architecture reorganized around police work, the counterinsurgency flourished. In this environment, the British Special Branch of the Police, responsible for collecting and collating intelligence began to roll-up the insurgents. They expanded their collection apparatus by establishing posts in outlying areas, to include the new resettlement villages. The Special Branch developed a network of paid informants and were able to “turn” some CTs into double agents resulting in the foiling of insurgent operations and the disclosure and capture of entire insurgent cells. As the war progressed, the Special Branch improved further by establishing a school that taught counterinsurgent tactics and techniques learned in the field to new arrivals and indigenous recruits.⁶⁶

By 1957, the British had largely pacified the Malayan peninsula and granted the country full independence by August of that year. The insurgency persisted until 1960 but, by this time, the movement was fragmented and largely ineffective having been deprived of its base; with independence, the insurgency lost its anti-colonialist propaganda message as well. After twelve years of frustration, adaptation, and innovation, British success in Malaya was complete.

The British performance during the Malayan Emergency is often cited as the paradigm for a successfully prosecuted counterinsurgency. The historical record supports this viewpoint, though not without some important stipulations. First, the British were not neophytes in Malaya; despite the brief Japanese interregnum during WWII, they benefited from a century of colonial rule which afforded them an understanding of the people, culture, and peculiarities of the peninsula. Secondly, the insurgent movement was comprised almost exclusively of ethnic Chinese whose cause engendered little sympathy from the Malay people who constituted the majority of the population.⁶⁷ This fortuitous demographic provided the British a significant early advantage. Further, the insurgents enjoyed little outside assistance because they “had no

common border with any sympathetic country.”⁶⁸ The counterinsurgent forces were able to isolate their adversaries from the general public, an important pre-condition for success.

Finally, success was not immediate. Twelve tumultuous years passed, during most of which, the outcome hung precariously in the balance. In these early years, the British suffered significant loss of life, endured policy miscalculations, and weathered stiff resistance from the insurgents. Only after the passage of several years, did the colonial government become the “learning organization” characterized by John Nagl in *Learning to Eat Soup With a Knife*, thus enabling it to reverse British fortunes in Malaya.⁶⁹ In short, success was not achieved overnight; to the contrary, it was time-consuming, resource-intensive, and bloody, despite the aforementioned favorable pre-conditions. These factors should be contemplated carefully “by those who would seek the counter-revolutionary panacea in Malaya.”⁷⁰

Extrapolating Lessons for the Future

The historical vignettes are useful because they highlight commonalities and recurring themes in counterinsurgency warfare. They demonstrate the centrality of intelligence information to the success or failure of the overall effort. But also, they reveal the volatility and chimerical nature of each environment. Consequently, arbitrarily extracting lessons from one environment and superimposing them onto another, can be a recipe for defeat. For instance, the *cordon sanitaire* worked brilliantly in Algeria; it stopped the flow of insurgents and materiel from Tunisia and Morocco.⁷¹ However, the *cordon sanitaire* would be unfeasible in Iraq because of the sheer size of the frontier and the amount of manpower it would take to enforce it. This is just one example of blind imitation being impractical, but it is illustrative of the point. Each insurgency has its own unique characteristics. Therefore, applying techniques from counterinsurgency case studies requires considerable thought and sound judgment.

The most valuable lessons obtained from a historical review of counterinsurgency campaigns are the broader concepts – these have proven to be enduring and have near-universal application. Unfortunately, there is no rote prescription that, if followed faithfully, would yield a successful outcome each time. Fighting insurgency is more art than science; the successful campaigns have struck the right balance between delivering force and bestowing favor.⁷²

Counterinsurgency victories have been buttressed by a belief or perception among the population that the future under the counterinsurgents is brighter than under the rebels. This belief or perception is built over time, brick by brick, with each government success, with each fulfilled promise to the public, and with the growing feeling of physical safety and prosperity

fostered by the government. That being said, intelligence is the engine that drives these successes. The intelligence obtained by police, military, and civilian operatives, from multiple sources and methods, is vital to both political and military efforts to neutralize the insurgency. As Daniel Byman intoned, “Intelligence is the *sine qua non* of counterinsurgency.” It is the foundation upon which the campaign will be won or lost.⁷³

There are three characteristics common to successful counterinsurgency campaigns: the establishment of a competent police force and HUMINT gathering organization under a single authority, permanent police and intelligence presence *en masse* throughout the country, and professional indigenous police and security forces to augment, and ultimately, supplant occupation or military forces. A counterinsurgency program that embraces these concepts stands an excellent chance of gaining the intelligence necessary to win the overall campaign. In counterinsurgency operations, success breeds success – early progress by the government inspires confidence and goodwill among the people and oftentimes yields reciprocity in intelligence gathering. Lieutenant Colonel B.I.S. Gourlay underscored this “chicken-or-the-egg” phenomenon in his essay *Terror in Cyprus*:

The acquisition of information has not been such an easy matter...to be successful in this (finding and eliminating the enemy), we must have information; yet without success we get no information. This is a vicious cycle and one that had to be broken.⁷⁴

Gourlay’s dilemma should resolve itself over time as the counterinsurgent intelligence structure matures; however, it is useful to “prime the pump and hasten the flow” in the interim.⁷⁵ In a developed theater, at the outset of hostilities, this burden usually falls upon existing occupation and indigenous police and intelligence cadre and their trustworthy indigenous operatives. Because of their training, experience, cultural awareness and contacts, these indigenous operatives can be expected to exploit their personal acquaintances and offer the best chance of obtaining actionable intelligence. In an undeveloped theater, like the one U.S. forces encountered in Iraq in 2003, the challenge is greater. With no indigenous apparatus intact, U.S. military police and HUMINT operators had to build the intelligence picture from scratch.⁷⁶

During these difficult times at the outbreak of the insurgency, when the rebel forces have the intelligence edge and the operational initiative, credible information will be in short supply. It is imperative that counterinsurgent leaders quickly lay the groundwork for success by organizing their intelligence architecture, identifying locations for police outposts, and by establishing a comprehensive training program for indigenous police and intelligence forces. The leadership must also be wary of “insurgent penetration” by maintaining a vigilant counterintelligence

posture; “successful penetration allows the insurgents to avoid regime attempts to arrest or kill insurgent cadre [and] it gives the insurgents inside information that greatly increases their effectiveness in planning attacks.”⁷⁷ In the ensuing segments, this paper will examine these approaches and demonstrate their importance to the intelligence effort and, by extension, their importance to the entire campaign.

Police Work and Human Intelligence under a Single Authority

As successful counterinsurgency campaigns suggest, a universal principle emerges – a joint police and intelligence organization, focused on the exploitation of human intelligence data, is essential to victory. Normally, the practitioners of this enterprise are indigenous police forces and military HUMINT operatives under the auspices of the local and/or occupation authorities, which employ overt, covert, and clandestine methodologies to penetrate the insurgent underground. Equally noteworthy, is that all the successful efforts were coordinated under a single authority to ensure unity of effort.⁷⁸

The police are the logical authorities to organize the intelligence network. They have the organization, distribution of personnel, and wide contacts with the population to accomplish the task...intelligence collection, processing, and distribution must be jointly conducted with the military, administrative, and political establishments...joint collection of intelligence thus becomes the foundation for unity of effort among the various agencies responsible for counter-revolutionary operations.⁷⁹

At the same time, the police and HUMINT effort must be supported by an active counterintelligence campaign to deny and frustrate the insurgency. Successful counterinsurgencies have built momentum by thwarting hostile intelligence operations and parlaying these successes into propaganda victories.

The director or commander of this intelligence organization may be a police officer or a military intelligence officer; however, it is imperative that this individual have the requisite background and experience to manage these specialized, complex operations. When reading about the importance of police work in counterinsurgency warfare, it is important to note that the desired skill sets are investigative in nature. The business of the police in counterinsurgency operations is to extract, analyze, and disseminate information gathered from the public and captured hostiles for use in the apprehension or elimination of known insurgents. This is complex detective work involving surveillance, the recruitment and management of informants, informal questioning and solicitation, detainee operations, and the formal interrogation of suspected insurgents and their associates. This is not routine law enforcement. The police commander must be more police detective than anything else. Likewise, should a military

intelligence officer be selected to head this organization, the ideal candidate would be a school-trained HUMINT officer with strong leadership credentials and extensive field experience in overt, covert, and clandestine operations.

The appointed director must be well-versed in police and intelligence investigative processes and able to respond to adaptive insurgent *modus operandi*. In Iraq, the United States is facing an insurgency with external connections well beyond state borders. The director of intelligence operations must know that:

Police capability has always been vital to destroy insurgent political undergrounds but is becoming more so as insurgency mutates. Today effective, preferably multinational law enforcement support is vital to limit insurgent access to resources whether through direct criminal activity or ties to global organized crime.⁸⁰

The director of intelligence operations must establish a systematic approach to collecting, collating, analyzing, producing, and disseminating data as the first order of business. As noted earlier, the French in Algeria and the British in Malaya, both established centralized intelligence organizations in their respective areas of operation with superb results.⁸¹ Information and reports gathered from multiple sources were funneled to the intelligence headquarters for all-source analysis, cataloguing, and action in a hierarchical fashion. Then, in cases where the acquired data was time-sensitive, finished intelligence products were disseminated to the operators for immediate action. In other cases, where the data was less precise or incomplete, it was further developed and used to drive planning for future operations. Both the Algeria and Malaya campaigns were waged prior to the advent of the information age, and consequently, both were subject to the limitations of paper, telephones, and radio communications. Ultimately, the refinement and thoroughness of this process were sufficient to overcome the limitations of the bureaucracy, and in both cases, the counterinsurgency prevailed.

Today, the same general principles apply; but now, the information has the potential to move much more rapidly from the collector to the customer and can be merged with intelligence gathered from other technical means (if available) to create an all-source product.⁸² Hierarchical organizations persist; but the trend is toward flatter, network-centric structures that offer more agility. They use less time processing, analyzing, and disseminating intelligence, and more closely mirror the structures, methods, and tactics of the insurgents.⁸³

But, as it was in the past, direct human interface still remains the preferred method of gathering intelligence in a counterinsurgency campaign. IMINT, SIGINT, MASINT, and other intelligence disciplines all contribute to the effort, but in the low-tech environment of the insurgent, there are scant few targets that lend themselves solely to these forms of exploitation.

Attempts to use other disciplines exclusively, without corroborating HUMINT, have produced faulty targeting and calamitous collateral damage which the population may view as indiscriminant and which feeds insurgent propaganda.⁸⁴ Consequently, the most reliable source of intelligence in counterinsurgency operations is derived from direct human contact.

There are many methods of gathering HUMINT to support counterinsurgency operations. Each of these methods is a potential tool in the intelligence director's comprehensive campaign to pierce the insurgent network. Before reviewing these methods, it should be noted that the vast majority of HUMINT data is derived from what most would consider mundane police and intelligence work – principally, patrolling the beat, questioning ordinary citizens, and investigating crimes. On the other hand, while extremely valuable, only a small percentage of overall HUMINT collection comes from covert or clandestine means. This fact does not deride covert or clandestine operations, but underscores the great value derived from decidedly less glamorous, even tedious, overt HUMINT operations.

For example, one of the most routine, yet most productive, methods of collection is through daily contact with the population. Police officers, particularly indigenous officers, are suited ideally for this task.⁸⁵ In the course of their daily duties, police officers render reports on personalities, incidents, and other activity occurring in their areas of responsibility. While these reports are voluminous and difficult to compile, they form the bedrock of the intelligence effort. Modern data basing tools allow analysts, agents, and investigators to search this electronic warehouse using criteria such as date, type of activity, name, and location, thereby facilitating trend analysis and corroboration of other collected intelligence. The keys to this effort are two-fold: first, policemen must be well-trained, observant, and conscientious in their reporting to ensure the integrity of the database; and second, the database must be accessible to all who have a "need to know" and not "stove-piped" within police or HUMINT channels only.

Another more conventional method of gathering HUMINT is the cordon and search. This is a valid collection technique that very often is executed poorly. In Iraq, during the early days of the insurgency, cordon and search operations were conducted carelessly and received criticism for alienating the general public.⁸⁶ This procedure is employed most often when initial intelligence on the target is not specific enough or incomplete. A geographic area is designated to be cordoned, or surrounded, to cut off potential escape routes from the target area; police, military, or security forces are used to search systematically the area for the specified target. Inhabitants of the area are questioned and residences and buildings are thoroughly searched in an effort to capture a target or gain additional intelligence for future exploitation.⁸⁷

Police and counterintelligence agents also receive valuable information from informants, or sources. These collaborators willingly cooperate with authorities by providing information of value about the insurgents. They may do this for a variety of reasons which include everything from patriotism to abject greed.⁸⁸ This information can be extremely valuable, particularly after the source has been evaluated formally for reliability and trustworthiness by the handling agent.

There are two principal considerations when dealing with informants. First, they must be evaluated continually by their handlers to ensure that they have not been “turned” by the enemy. If so, they could be providing disinformation to the agent, or worse yet, collecting for the insurgents. Second, their identities and their cooperation with the government must be kept confidential, in order to afford them continued access to intelligence and, to keep them and their families safe from reprisals.

Police and intelligence operatives also conduct surveillance operations. “Surveillance, the covert observation of persons and places, is one of the principal methods of gaining and confirming intelligence information.”⁸⁹ Surveillance may be conducted against fixed sites to monitor suspected or known enemy activity or against individuals who are known or suspected insurgents or associates of insurgents. Surveillance employs sophisticated tradecraft that requires extensive training and experience to be successful, but if expertly employed, it can yield vital information about insurgent forces and their activities.

There are other methods of gathering HUMINT that offer greater intelligence returns, although they also involve considerably more risk.⁹⁰ These are clandestine operations which employ government agents to infiltrate the insurgent network, posing as insurgents, in order to gather intelligence surreptitiously. While the payoff can be great, these agents face a personal risk of capture or death if discovered. Their exposure poses a risk to the government as well. The insurgents can use an exposed spy operation to great propaganda effect. HUMINT agents might also attempt to persuade a captured insurgent or defector to conduct espionage against his own organization “while remaining ostensibly loyal to the government.”⁹¹ This use of the “double agent” also promises great intelligence returns if successful, but equally dangerous results if discovered:

A corollary technique is to place a trusted agent in a critical job where he has access to classified information; this position makes him a prime target for recruitment overtures by the underground organization and he can subsequently serve as a double agent.⁹²

Another important source of HUMINT is from interrogation. Police and HUMINT agents interrogate “agents, informers, suspects, and captured or surrendered members of the insurgent organization” in an effort to gather critical, first-hand information about the capabilities and

intentions of the insurgent movement.⁹³ U.S. interrogation methodologies have received intense scrutiny in the wake of the Abu Ghraib prison scandal in Iraq which has led to a complete re-examination of U.S. interrogation doctrine. Intelligence experts hope to forge a doctrinal response to this inquiry that balances military intelligence requirements with national and international ethical values and standards of conduct. Interrogation is too vital a part of intelligence collection to be abandoned completely. The interrogation of a high-value target, when properly conducted, remains an invaluable source of intelligence information: "In the last four years of the Malayan Emergency the intelligence gathered from each surrender resulted in the death of two insurgents."⁹⁴ Because of their continued utility, interrogation techniques will be revised to reflect the values of American culture and remain an important source of HUMINT in support of counterinsurgency warfare.

Counterinsurgencies are Manpower-Intensive

The second universal characteristic of successful counterinsurgency warfare is the massive deployment of forces throughout the area of operations. Counterinsurgencies are manpower-intensive by nature. There is no substitute for the robust presence of police and military cadre on the ground; preferably doing something to ensure the security of the people. This robust presence is necessary for a number of reasons, not the least of which is to facilitate civil-military operations in support of the government's "hearts and minds" initiative. But, it is also decisive from an intelligence perspective. The intelligence gathered by police and military forces in these outposts and far-flung villages is the oxygen of the counterinsurgency campaign. Without this data, operations would grind to a standstill.

One of the principal failings of the French in Indochina was the lack of adequate personnel on the ground. There were not enough soldiers, police, or administrators to pacify simultaneously some regions of Indochina while attempting to clear out others; the Viet Minh simply avoided each French thrust and watched the tiger chase its tail to exhaustion. Similarly, without stable outposts gathering information, the French were unable to develop a thorough understanding of General Giap's intentions and capabilities in northern Indochina. This dilemma bears some similarity to U.S. counterinsurgency efforts in Iraq and leads to the next important question.

If physical presence is important in quelling insurgency, how many counterinsurgents does it take to extinguish a virulent insurgency? In order to deal with any large-scale insurgency, particularly in a vast expanse of territory, the force ratio between government forces and insurgents must favor the government. Based on two historical examples, 25:1 or even

30:1 is probably not far off the mark; whatever the case, the ratio should provide a significant advantage to the government given that most of the other factors at the outset favor the insurgent.⁹⁵

Depending upon whose estimate of insurgent figures is correct, the ratio of counterinsurgents to insurgents in Iraq ranges from a healthy 30:1 to a frightening 1.5:1.⁹⁶ Most likely, the truth lies somewhere in the middle. In either case, it is incumbent upon the counterinsurgent forces to improve upon this ratio by steadily increasing the number of trained and able indigenous forces. Any post-conflict planning effort that does not acknowledge the criticality of maintaining a healthy force ratio between counterinsurgents and insurgents is denying the importance of physical presence, ignoring the manpower-intensive nature of this type of warfare, and courting disaster.

Once the requisite numbers of policemen and soldiers are trained and ready, the next step is to deploy them strategically throughout the country. This technique, referred to as “oil spot” strategy, employs pockets of civil-military teams including police, administrators, and soldiers in clusters throughout the country.⁹⁷ The object is to gradually expand from these locations by conducting pacification operations in the surrounding areas. In theory, the clusters will become contiguous as the insurgency melts away. The U.S.’ Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) concept in Afghanistan and Iraq is an example of this approach.⁹⁸

Initial site selection is the first consideration. It is prudent to deploy the first teams or outposts in the regions which are under government control or only marginally threatened by the insurgents; and then, expand to other regions, as the military forces secure additional territory. As this deployment of detachments and outposts continues, more intelligence information will become available as well; further fueling the entire process.

Implementing a systematic approach to intelligence gathering within these localities is essential to shutting down the insurgent network. Over the years, different techniques have been developed to accomplish this task; as noted in the second vignette, Roger Trinquier’s employment of gridded sectors, comprehensive over watch, and rigid accountability measures worked very effectively in Algeria. But, a finer net must be cast to catch insurgents in Iraq.⁹⁹ These cells, devoid of traditional structure, are small, non-hierarchical, and operate nearly-autonomously. They communicate infrequently through messengers or in coded messages via the Internet. Thus, they expose themselves less frequently to exploitation or capture. To foil these insurgents, a combination of low-tech, traditional police techniques must be supplemented with state-of-the-art HUMINT computer tool sets that afford collectors rapid access to key networks and databases. In this way, biographical sketches, photos, fingerprints, arrest

records, and other important data can be passed between headquarters and individual operatives instantly. This may not help to find the needle in the haystack, but it does shrink the haystack.

The shortage of coalition and indigenous troops, police, and civil servants has been a problem for the U.S. in Iraq since the spring of 2003. It became clear within weeks after the declared end to major combat operations that the U.S. troop presence was insufficient to maintain order there.¹⁰⁰ This was exacerbated by the fact that the indigenous military and police forces dissolved in the wake of their defeat and were formally disbanded by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in May 2003.¹⁰¹

In hindsight, most expert observers agreed that a larger force was needed in Iraq, even if they could not agree on whether this force would have prevented the insurgency.¹⁰² At a minimum, it would have been useful to curb the widespread looting and to protect the ammunition points that were left unguarded and subsequently raided by the insurgents.¹⁰³ From an intelligence perspective, U.S. and coalition forces were nearly blind.¹⁰⁴ Without an indigenous network in place, military policeman and HUMINT collectors began the campaign without a start-up database; they had few leads or contacts and those they did receive were mostly unreliable.¹⁰⁵ The lessons learned in Iraq only reinforce the lessons of Indochina, Algeria, and Malaya – counterinsurgency is manpower-intensive. The host government or the occupying power must augment its organic forces to cope with a large-scale insurgency. If the necessary forces cannot be generated internally, then they have to be mustered from the indigenous population, trained and certified by competent cadre, and prepared to assume real missions as soon as possible.¹⁰⁶

The historical record demonstrates that counterinsurgencies, and the complementary intelligence operations that support them, are manpower-intensive. Failure to recognize this or attempting to correct the problem too late, vastly increases the likelihood of failure. Consequently, police and intelligence professionals must be deployed in sufficient strength and in constant contact with as much of the public as possible to gather information. In this fashion, counterinsurgent forces can be deprived of their base support, isolated, and rendered ineffective.

Integration of Indigenous Forces

The final universal characteristic of successful counterinsurgency campaigns is the full integration of functioning, well-trained, indigenous police and intelligence forces. If history is a reliable indicator, in the wake of a conflict resulting in regime change in which an insurgency

erupts, the occupying force will be undermanned, lacking in cultural awareness, and short of native linguists. Indigenous forces offer the most logical and appropriate source of additional manpower. In Algeria and Malaya, these forces were virtually non-existent at the outset. As a result, both the French and British suffered grievously in their respective insurgencies. The two theaters were characterized by incorrect or inadequate intelligence, the government had little or no contact with the population, and the insurgents had unbridled freedom of movement. Fortunately for the counterinsurgents, they learned from their mistakes and took appropriate corrective measures to address the problems. By the end of the conflict, the indigenous forces were robust and ably assisting in the day-to-day prosecution of the war.

Indigenous forces bring skills to the campaign that are not replicated easily by the occupying force; these include cultural sensitivity, language fluency, and familiarity with the population. In his insightful essay, *Time, Space, and Will: The Politico-Military Views of Mao Tse-tung*, E.L. Katzenbach, jr., warns that counterinsurgency “operations must cause minimum harm to the people, lest they become antagonistic to the government. The troops must be highly disciplined to respect civilian rights and property.”¹⁰⁷ Indigenous police and intelligence operatives can avoid this error. They have personal contacts among the population and generally, a better understanding of the nuances of the problems plaguing the country. This makes indigenous personnel ideal for civilian policing and all manner of covert and clandestine operations where blending into the population is paramount.

In the post-colonial world, an occupying or external force cannot afford to prosecute the counterinsurgency campaign on its own.¹⁰⁸ Not only are the manpower numbers insurmountable, but also the strong feelings of fear, distrust, and resentment engendered by the occupiers.¹⁰⁹ An occupation force rouses resistance even among the most moderate elements in a country. Therefore, it is imperative that occupying powers promote and accelerate the transfer of power to indigenous authorities as soon as feasible. If a cadre of advisors or operatives is required in the aftermath, this presence should be minimized to the greatest extent possible.

The first step in building competent indigenous forces is to establish comprehensive formal training programs to educate them in these critical disciplines. The French and the British established training academies in-country in an effort to constitute rapidly indigenous police and security operatives, as well as to train their own inbound soldiers. For example in Malaya, the British expanded the indigenous Home Guard from a force of 79,000 in 1951 to a force of 259,000 by 1953.¹¹⁰ In the early stages of an insurgency, the government can use newly-constituted units to hold down low-skill positions and conduct lower-risk missions, thus

freeing up trained cadre to perform the more complex tasks. In time, however, the expectations will rise until the indigenous units are fully capable of performing all tasks within the police and intelligence forces. Care must be taken to ensure these forces are not rushed to combat; they must be ready for increased responsibility or the results can be disastrous.¹¹¹ Following this milestone, indigenous forces are ready to receive a complete transfer of authority from government or occupying forces.

In Iraq today, U.S. forces, recognizing the criticality of indigenous units to the overall outcome of the war, are following this example. They have expended great resources and energy to reconstitute Iraqi police and military units.¹¹² In particular, an all-out effort was launched by the Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq (MNSTC-I) to reconstitute credible indigenous forces in country. Their mission is to “organize, train, equip, and mentor Iraqi Security Forces” and to produce a force fit for duty and in possession of adequate esprit and professionalism to augment, and eventually, replace U.S. and coalition forces.¹¹³ Observers have offered mixed reviews of the chances for success. Many of these units are functioning now, but it remains to be seen how they will perform without U.S. support; only time will tell if the effort was successful.¹¹⁴ While there is no timetable for the withdrawal, or partial withdrawal, of U.S. forces from Iraq, most believe “the clock is ticking.”¹¹⁵ When that day comes, these newly-formed Iraqi military and police units will be expected to take responsibility for their own country, whether they are ready or not.

Conclusions

Modern counterinsurgency successes have featured three universal characteristics: the existence of a powerful police and intelligence organization under the direction of a single authority; a robust physical presence throughout the country which feeds the intelligence picture; and the establishment of a professional indigenous police and military force to augment, and eventually, replace external forces. These characteristics have been in place in all the successful counterinsurgency efforts of note; the absence of any one of which, places the overall outcome in jeopardy.

In Iraq, the coalition is adapting its efforts with some success after wasting nearly a year between the summers of 2003 and 2004.¹¹⁶ Unfortunately, this lost time may prove too costly to overcome. Political factors are already weighing heavily on the situation as the American public and lawmakers increasingly question the cost in lives and dollars spent in Iraq.¹¹⁷ If the three aforementioned components were implemented, the possibility of success would be enhanced, but the odds remained stacked against a successful coalition outcome in Iraq. Each of these

characteristics is interdependent, with the success or failure in one directly affecting the other. Analyses and recommendations are as follows:

- A Unified Intelligence and Police Organization under a Single Authority. Despite its warts, the coalition has achieved its goal here. The problem is not the architecture. Imagine that the coalition intelligence hierarchy is a brand new steel manufacturing plant with all the latest automation and machinery; equipped with a full staff of highly-trained foremen and workers at the ready, furnaces firing; but with one major problem – there is no iron ore to make into steel. Despite the expertise, technology, and analytical power of the intelligence organization in Iraq there is not enough raw intelligence to feed the system.¹¹⁸ Without sufficient input, the efficiency of the analysis, production, and dissemination mechanism is irrelevant. The coalition does not have enough human intelligence collectors to generate the intelligence needed to support this effort. The intelligence to support counterinsurgency operations must be collected on the ground in all corners of the area of operations. This is essential in ascertaining enemy intentions, locating enemy insurgents, and neutralizing them before they can strike their intended targets. There are only two viable ways of getting this human intelligence collection capacity: through the rapid introduction of indigenous forces (see below) or through the expansion of the coalition to include UN-, NATO-, or regionally-sponsored troops in possession of this expertise.¹¹⁹
- A Robust Physical Presence throughout the Country. Without a sizeable increase in troop strength either from additional troop contributing nations or indigenous forces, the coalition has insufficient numbers to defeat the insurgency. This is not based on a measure of coalition combat power, core competencies, disposition of forces, or quality and quantity of equipment – all of which are adequate. This is based upon the impossible task of providing physical troop coverage to a nation the size of California, with multiple population centers, heterogeneous cultures, religions, tribes, and languages, with a force more suited to cover an area the size of Massachusetts.¹²⁰ Because the numbers in Iraq are inadequate, the intelligence flow required to stem the insurgency (gained through day-to-day interaction between soldiers and Iraqi civilians) is not being generated in sufficient quantity to meet the threat. Thus, it can be seen how inadequacy in one area directly affects another. Given Iraq's expansive territory and the percentage of coalition forces actually involved in patrolling the streets (vice manning staffs), it is not surprising that insurgents can attack or emplace improvised explosive devices and melt into the population with impunity. As with the first point,

the coalition must be expanded to quell the insurgency; if it is politically impossible to do so using organic forces, it must be done with indigenous forces. The introduction of a UN-, NATO-, or regionally-sponsored interim force (preferably Muslim) to bridge the gap between the drawdown of the coalition and the availability of Iraqi forces also should be considered.

- The Establishment of Professional Indigenous Police and Military Forces. Of the three key areas cited above, by far, the coalition is making the most progress in the generation of indigenous security forces. Seemingly, the coalition has seized the importance of this enterprise and has established a command explicitly designed to oversee it. This is important since it represents the only leg of the triad that the coalition can affect to any significant degree and it offers the most likely avenue of achieving success in Iraq. The political realities which restrict the growth of U.S. troop contributions, and in fact, may soon dictate a decrease in U.S. military presence; demand a non-U.S. solution to the manpower deficiency. The hope is that indigenous forces will fulfill this shortfall by supplementing, and ultimately, replacing coalition forces. Select coalition elements, buttressed by UN-, NATO-, and/or regionally-sponsored interim forces, would remain to assist Iraqi forces in the transition to independent operations and self-sufficiency.

In the end, victory over the insurgency cannot be accomplished without a significant infusion of competent manpower, the bulk of which must come from the Iraqi population. If the coalition can train a reliable, indigenous force, expand international and regional involvement in Iraq, and underwrite security during the transition to Iraqi authority, the odds for success will be enhanced. However, given the obstacles and the likely time frame remaining to complete the task, the prospect of marginalizing the insurgency and establishing an independent, fully-functioning Iraqi state is tenuous at best.

Endnotes

¹ In his book *The Art of Counter-Revolutionary War*, John J. McCuen, commenting on the historical record of counterinsurgencies states, "the won-lost record for the counter-revolutionaries is none too impressive." John J. McCuen, *The Art of Counter-Revolutionary War*, (Harrisburg, Pa: Stackpole Books, 1966), 315.

² For instance, John Nagl points out that while the British have been praised as a "learning organization" in Malaya they also had the benefit of over a century of presence in country to "develop long-term relationships and cultural awareness," not all counterinsurgent campaigns are afforded that luxury. John A. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup With a Knife*, (Chicago, IL:

University of Chicago Press, 2005), xiii. It is also worth noting that the population of Malaya was nearly 50% ethnic Malay who were wholly unsympathetic to the rebel ethnic Chinese from the outset; see Nagl, 60. McCuen states, "as we have observed in all counter-revolutionary wars, the fact that many of the techniques are abbreviated or altered to fit local conditions must be considered the rule rather than the exception." John J. McCuen, *The Art of Counter-Revolutionary War*, (Harrisburg, Pa: Stackpole Books, 1966), 323. Further, he points out that in the Greek Civil War, the government benefited immeasurably from Tito's closure of the Yugoslav-Macedonian border to the rebels and from significant external support from the U.S. The Filipinos were able to take the powerful "anti-colonialism" plank from the rebels' ideological campaign and were also significantly endowed with U.S. financial support, 321-322.

³ A statistical analysis contained in Major John S. Pustay's book provides the following figures: "(1) in general, one guerrilla is capable of tying down or dissipating the usefulness of ten conventional soldiers; (2) fifteen regular troops are killed for every guerrilla fatality; (3) in Malaya, it required 6,500 hours of patrol or ambush time to see a single Communist guerrilla, and, of those spotted, only one out of ten was killed or captured; (4) also in Malaya, it took a 30:1 ratio of counterinsurgents to guerrillas to effect victory; (5) in Greece, 200,000 regular troops were employed to defeat 30,000 guerrillas." Major John S. Pustay, *Counterinsurgency Warfare* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1965), 86-87. According to David Galula, "the British calculated that every rebel in Malaya cost \$200,000. In Algeria, the FLN budget at its peak amounted to \$30 or \$40 million a year, less than the French forces had to spend in two weeks." David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964), 11.

⁴ "The United States must accept the fact that real grievances, producing real demands, provide most of the impetus for guerrilla war, and we must prepare to meet or at least undercut those demands." Peter Paret and John W. Shy, "Guerrilla Warfare and U.S. Military Policy: A Study," in *The Guerrilla – And How to Fight Him*, ed. Lieutenant Colonel T. N. Greene (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), 53. On the other hand, "an efficient propaganda machine can turn an artificial problem into a real one," Galula, 23. Whether real or invented, those planning counterinsurgent campaigns must be prepared to contend with this dilemma.

⁵ Anthony H. Cordesman, "The Iraq War and Its Strategic Lessons for Counterinsurgency," (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 9 December 2005), 10; available from <http://www.csis.org/pubs/>; Internet; accessed 16 December 2005.

⁶ *Small Wars Manual: United States Marine Corps* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1940), 15-16; Galula, 89.

⁷ Colonel Thomas X. Hammes, *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century* (St. Paul, MN: Zenith Press, 2004), 231.

⁸ "The backbone of effective psychological action is a clear, well-published national programme for the future of the country...which will take the psychological and political initiative away from the revolutionaries. It must include not only the stated aspirations of the people but anticipate the unstated ones as well," McCuen, 326.

⁹ Bruce Hoffman, "Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq," Rand Corporation, National Security Research Division, June 2004, 10; available from http://www.rand.org/research_areas/national_security/; Internet; accessed 4 November 2005.

¹⁰ Hammes, 263.

¹¹ Steven Metz and Raymond Millen, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in the 21st Century: Reconceptualizing Threat and Response* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2004), 20.

¹² Ibid., 21.

¹³ Vo Nguyen Giap, "Inside the Vietminh," in *The Guerrilla – And How to Fight Him*, ed. Lieutenant Colonel T. N. Greene (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), 167-177.

¹⁴ McCuen, 261.

¹⁵ Lucien Bodard, *The Quicksand War*, available from <http://members.lycos.co.uk/Indochine/>; Internet; accessed 4 November 2005.

¹⁶ McCuen, 115.

¹⁷ Bernard B. Fall, *Street Without Joy* in "Losing in the Jungle – Indochina," in *The Guerrilla – And How to Fight Him*, ed. Lieutenant Colonel T. N. Greene (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), 197.

¹⁸ Bernard B. Fall, *Street Without Joy* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1964), 112, 141.

¹⁹ Ibid., 78.

²⁰ McCuen, 240.

²¹ Metz and Millen, 28.

²² McCuen, 251 and Fall, *Street Without Joy*, 268-271.

²³ Andrew R. Molnar, *Human Factors Considerations of Undergrounds in Insurgencies* (Washington, DC: The American University, 1966), 238.

²⁴ McCuen, 279-280.

²⁵ Ibid., 249-251 and Galula, 41.

²⁶ McCuen, 129.

²⁷ Bard E. O'Neill, *Insurgency & Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse*, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, Inc., 2005), 79.

²⁸ Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962*, revised ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 1987), 30-43, 54-55, 60-64, 69-73.

²⁹ Colonel Gilles Martin, "War in Algeria: The French Experience," *Military Review* (July-August 2005), 52.

³⁰ Ibid., 51.

³¹ Ibid., 54.

³² McCuen, 317.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., 117.

³⁵ Molnar, 235.

³⁶ Ivan F.W. Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counter-Insurgencies: Guerrillas and Their Opponents Since 1750* (Routledge NY: Routledge Publishing, Inc., 2001), 163.

³⁷ Horne, 102-104.

³⁸ Martin, 55, and Beckett, 163.

³⁹ Martin, 55.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Beckett, 163.

⁴² Roger Trinquier, *Modern Warfare*, trans. Daniel Lee (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964), 73-77.

⁴³ Martin, 55.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 56.

⁴⁵ Beckett, 163.

⁴⁶ Galula, 41.

⁴⁷ Beckett, 164.

⁴⁸ McCuen, 142.

⁴⁹ Beckett, 165.

⁵⁰ Galula, 98-99.

⁵¹ McCuen, 317.

⁵² Robert R. Tomes, "Relearning Counterinsurgency Warfare," *Parameters* (Spring 2004): 19.

⁵³ Nagl, 64. The Malayan Races Liberation Army (MRLA) was among the more prominent.

⁵⁴ Lieutenant Colonel Rowland S.N. Mans, "Winning in the Jungle – Malaya," in *The Guerrilla – And How to Fight Him*, ed. Lieutenant Colonel T. N. Greene (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), 119.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Pustay, 24.

⁵⁷ Mans, 119.

⁵⁸ Mans, 120.

⁵⁹ "Squatters" were ethnic Chinese-Malays whose ancestors had migrated to Malaya, with the encouragement of the British, to work the mines and plantations -- they were poor and usually lived in the jungle on the fringe of Malayan civilization. Most neither supported nor opposed the insurgency, but by virtue of their Chinese heritage, their villages provided a safe haven to the mostly Chinese insurgents, McCuen, 91-2, 154-163. "Between 1950 and 1952, under the Briggs Plan, 400,000 people were resettled into 410 defended villages. The British cut off outside sanctuary of the terrorists, closing the Thai border and patrolling the sea, while through aerial observation they made it nearly impossible for the insurgents to grow food in the jungle. To combat Communist propaganda efforts to disrupt the massive resettlement program, the British persuaded settlers to move voluntarily by offering tangible benefits of health and school facilities, and improved living conditions," Molnar, 295.

⁶⁰ Mans, 120-121.

⁶¹ McCuen, 118, and Mans, 122-123.

⁶² Mans, 122.

⁶³ McCuen, 122.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 92-93.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 161-162.

⁶⁶ Nagl, 91-92.

⁶⁷ Galula, 20, and it was further noted that, "by the beginning of the Emergency, the Chinese population on the Peninsula amounted to about 38 per cent of the total," McCuen, 91.

⁶⁸ McCuen, 319.

⁶⁹ Through 1951, the "British Army's success...reveals markedly mixed results," Nagl, 77-78.

⁷⁰ McCuen, 319.

⁷¹ Ibid., 245-252.

⁷² Little attention has been paid to the counterinsurgency campaigns of totalitarian regimes because there are few applicable lessons for modern, liberal democracies. In most cases, the insurgencies were terminated brutally with great loss of life and little effort on behalf of the government to respect human rights or redress legitimate grievances.

⁷³ Daniel Byman, *Going to War With the Allies You Have: Allies, Counterinsurgency, and the War on Terrorism* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2005), 9.

⁷⁴ Lieutenant Colonel B.I.S. Gourlay, "Terror in Cyprus," in *The Guerrilla – And How to Fight Him*, ed. Lieutenant Colonel T. N. Greene (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), 242. And further, "intelligence is the principal source of information on guerrillas, and intelligence has to come from the population, but the population will not talk unless it feels safe, and it does not feel safe until the insurgent's power has been broken," Galula, 72. And again, "...no intelligence meant no contacts and no contacts meant no intelligence," Nagl, 93.

⁷⁵ Galula, 119.

⁷⁶ David C. Hendrickson and Robert W. Tucker, *Revisions in Need of Revising: What Went Wrong in the Iraq War* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2005), 17-18.

⁷⁷ Byman, 14.

⁷⁸ Hoffman, 7.

⁷⁹ McCuen, 114-115.

⁸⁰ Metz and Millen, 29.

⁸¹ Molnar, 267.

⁸² Thomas X. Hammes, writing in *The Sling and the Stone*, claims that we are underutilizing our capabilities; "our advanced information systems are still tied to an outdated hierarchical organization that slows the dissemination of information. Although specific high-priority commands receive near real-time intelligence, most commanders must submit their intelligence requirements up the chain of command. Each level validates, consolidates, and prioritizes the requests, which are then fed through the centralized staff system to task the assets that will actually collect against the requests," 192-193.

⁸³ Hoffman, 17-18.

⁸⁴ Pam Benson, "Source: Egyptians Killed in Strike," 17 January 2006; available from <http://www.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/asiapcf/01/17/pakistan.strike.foreign/index.html>; Internet; accessed 18 January 2006.

⁸⁵ "In Malaya, for example, British authorities believed the average villager would be more inclined to entrust information to a police officer he had known all his life than to a strange soldier," Molnar, 268.

⁸⁶ Hoffman, 6.

⁸⁷ Molnar, 275-278.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 272.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 278.

⁹⁰ Pustay, 107.

⁹¹ Molnar, 272-273.

⁹² Ibid., 273.

⁹³ Ibid., 281.

⁹⁴ Pustay, 107.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 86-87.

⁹⁶ Hendrickson and Tucker, 16.

⁹⁷ McCuen, 196.

⁹⁸ Hoffman, 8.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 17-18.

¹⁰⁰ Michael O'Hanlon, "Iraq Without a Plan," Policy Review Online No. 128, Washington DC, Hoover Institution, available from <http://www.policyreview.org/dec04/ohanlon.html>; Internet; accessed 2 November 2005.

¹⁰¹ James Fallows, "Why Iraq Has No Army," *The Atlantic Monthly* (December 2005): 15-17.

¹⁰² Lloyd J. Matthews, *Winning the War By Winning the Peace: Strategy for Conflict and Post-Conflict in the 21st Century* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2004), 59.

¹⁰³ Hendrickson and Tucker, 17.

¹⁰⁴ Hoffman, 11.

¹⁰⁵ Hendrickson and Tucker, 17.

¹⁰⁶ Cordesman, 17.

¹⁰⁷ Katzenbach, E.L., jr., "Time, Space, and Will: The Politico-Military Views of Mao Tse-tung," in *The Guerrilla – And How to Fight Him*, ed. Lieutenant Colonel T. N. Greene (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), 29.

¹⁰⁸ Cordesman, 13.

¹⁰⁹ W. Andrew Terrill and Conrad C. Crane, *Precedents, Variables, and Options in Planning A U.S. Military Disengagement Strategy From Iraq* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2005), 4.

¹¹⁰ Nagl, 100.

¹¹¹ “In an especially serious encounter in November, 2004, 4,000 out of about 5,400 Iraqi police in Mosul deserted the force in response to an insurgent uprising within the city,” Terrill and Crane, 32. And further, “One of the most serious threats to U.S. goals in Iraq is the danger of unrealistic optimism about the capabilities and élan of the Iraq security forces, and especially those units that have not actually been tested in combat. Such wishful thinking, if acted upon, could cause the Iraqi military to be given too much responsibility and then collapse in the face of enemy opposition which they are not yet prepared to address,” Terrill and Crane, 44.

¹¹² Fallows, 15-17.

¹¹³ *Mission Statement Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq*, available from <http://www.mnf-iraq.com/training.htm>; Internet; accessed 18 January 2006.

¹¹⁴ Terrill and Crane, 27.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 12.

¹¹⁶ Cordesman, 6, and Hoffman, 3-4.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 3-4.

¹¹⁸ Hoffman, 10-13.

¹¹⁹ Cordesman, 13, 15.

¹²⁰ *The World Atlas* (New York, NY: Random House, 1982), 98-99.